NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3 3433 08236915 2

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/memorialofwillia00bost

AN

Gaston W.
Boston. City

# MEMORIAL

OF

# WILLIAM GASTON

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

Wm. Fenton

A

# MEMORIAL

OF

# WILLIAM GASTON

FROM THE

## CITY OF BOSTON

BOSTON
PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE CITY COUNCIL
MDCCCXLV

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
191717
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
1900

PRESS OF
Rockwell and Churchill
BOSTON

DUP. EXCHANGE.
B. P. L. 20 NOV. 98

# CITY OF BOSTON.

In Board of Aldermen, June 25, 1894.

Ordered, That the Clerk of Committees, under the direction of the Committee on Printing, be hereby instructed to prepare and print fifteen hundred copies of a memorial volume, bound in cloth covers, containing a full account of the exercises in connection with the public oration on William Gaston, delivered at the Dudley-street Opera House, on Wednesday, June 13, 1894, the expense attending the same to be charged to the appropriation for Printing Department.

Passed. Sent down for concurrence, June 28.

Came up concurred.

The foregoing order was presented to the Mayor, June 30, 1894, and was not returned by him within ten days thereafter.

A true copy.

Attest:

JOHN M. GALVIN,
*City Clerk.*

# CONTENTS.


| | Page. |
|---|---|
| Death of William Gaston | 11 |
| Action of City Council | 11 |
| Action of the Board of Aldermen | 12 |
| Action of the Common Council | 19 |
| Memorial Services | 27 |
| The Eulogy | 37 |
| Resolutions of Thanks to Orator, etc. | 63 |
| Resolutions of Citizens of Roxbury | 64 |

# ACTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL.

# DEATH OF WILLIAM GASTON.

The death of William Gaston occurred January 19, 1894, at his residence, 179 Marlborough street, Boston, at about 10 o'clock A.M. He was not suffering from any special disease; his death resulting rather from a general failure of his vital powers, due to advancing years. He had been gradually failing for a week or more, and his friends had felt that death was liable to occur at any time; but the end came somewhat suddenly, although not unexpected. He died at the age of sixty-three years, three months, and sixteen days.

## ACTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL.

A call was issued by His Honor Mayor Matthews to the members of both branches of the City Council, to meet in their respective chambers on Saturday, the 20th of January, to take appropriate action relative to the death of William Gaston.

City of Boston, Office of the Mayor,
City Hall, January 19, 1894.

*To the Honorable the City Council:*

Gentlemen: It is my sad duty to announce the death of Hon. William Gaston, who served with distinction

as governor of Massachusetts in 1875, and as mayor of Boston in 1871 and 1872.

You are hereby requested to assemble in your respective chambers on Saturday, January 20, 1894, at 12 o'clock M., for the purpose of taking such action as you may deem appropriate to express the deep regard which the people of Boston had for him as chief magistrate of the Commonwealth, as mayor of this city, and as a private citizen.

Yours respectfully,

N. MATTHEWS, JR.,
*Mayor*

---

## THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN.

The Board of Aldermen met in the Aldermanic Chamber at 12 M., Chairman SANFORD presiding, and all the members present.

The call for the meeting was read and placed on file.

Alderman FOLSOM presented the following:

The City Council of Boston have learned with deep sorrow and regret of the decease of Hon. WILLIAM GASTON, one of Massachusetts' most distinguished jurists and statesmen, formerly mayor of Roxbury and for two years mayor of Boston, later the honored chief executive of our Commonwealth.

His illustrious career, exemplified as it has been by a conscientious love and devotion to the interests of his city and State, has endeared him to the honor and esteem of all our citizens.

*Resolved*, That we take this occasion to inscribe upon the records of our government sentiments of our highest appreciation for the purity of his character, the progressive and liberal administration which he rendered our city and State, and the broad and noble public record he left behind.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted to the family of the deceased.

Alderman FOLSOM said:

Mr. Chairman, in presenting these resolutions, I desire to say that the public has sustained a loss which cannot be measured in words. In all of the positions which the lamented ex-governor filled, he was ever actuated by the highest and most honorable motives, and the record which he has left behind is a credit to him as a citizen and public officer. Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, the greatest tribute that can be paid to his memory is a reference to his heroic and patriotic service as mayor of the old city of Roxbury. Holding his office at a period when the country was engaged in civil war, his every effort tended toward the assistance and the comfort of those who had left their homes and families to uphold the institutions of their country; many times having left his home to proceed to the front and personally superintend the arrangements which had been carried out by the patriotic citizens of Roxbury for the comfort of their heroes in the field. I repeat, Mr. Chairman, I take a sad pleasure in presenting these resolutions.

Alderman LEE said:

Mr. Chairman, it was not my privilege to have a personal acquaintance with Mayor Gaston, but we all know him well enough and are sufficiently familiar with his public career to know that he was one of Boston's, and we may say New England's, most distinguished statesmen. There are not many of our citizens who have been called by the choice of the people to fill so many and varied public positions, and who have in every instance performed their duties so honorably and creditably as William Gaston. He began his public life in the city of Roxbury, previous to the war of the Rebellion, and was elected mayor for the years 1861 and 1862, after having held the position of city solicitor for five years. Previous to this he had served three terms in the lower branch of the Massachusetts Legislature, and in 1868 he was elected to the State Senate. Roxbury was annexed to Boston in 1868, and in 1870 Mr. Gaston was elected mayor of Boston in a very close election, and was re-elected in 1871. In 1872 he ran again, but was defeated by Hon. Henry L. Pierce by seventy-nine votes; one of the most closely contested elections ever held in Boston. In 1874 he was elected governor of Massachusetts over Governor Talbot by a plurality of over seven thousand votes, and when it is considered that Massachusetts was at that time hopelessly Republican, and that Mr. Gaston was the first Democrat that had been chosen governor for thirty years, his election must be looked upon as a most remarkable tribute to his personal popularity. His second term as mayor, during the year 1872, was charac-

terized as one of the most eventful and exciting in the city's history. A terrible epidemic of small-pox raged during the summer and late into the fall and winter, the horse distemper visited our city in October and November, and in November came the great fire, the most disastrous calamity of its kind that has ever visited our city. There was no Board of Health then as it is now constituted, — the aldermen acting in that capacity, — and there was no Board of Fire Commissioners. Consequently it was to the mayor that the people looked for aid and relief, and he was in a great measure held responsible by the unthinking multitude for the disasters that visited and laid waste our city at that time. It was a heavy responsibility to bear, but in justice to Mayor Gaston it must be admitted that he was equal to the emergency, and that, in the trying situation in which he was placed, he exhibited the same prudence and wise judgment that have ever been characteristic of the man. It was in the legal arena, however, that his most distinct triumphs have been achieved. Although not a profound lawyer, his excellent judgment and high character, and his unusual skill as an advocate, won for him an enviable reputation among our most distinguished legal lights. He never stooped to anything mean or tricky in his professional career, and no slur of any kind has ever been cast upon his character. In considering him as a man, we must admit that the elements of popularity which he possessed were a kindly and gracious manner, and those sterling virtues of honesty and integrity which never fail to command our unqualified respect and admiration. In his personal bearing he was invariably courteous, almost to feminine sweetness,

and his kindly manner endeared him to his friends and won the esteem of all those with whom he came in contact. In his public life, particularly as mayor, his course was characterized by well-advised conservatism rather than by aggressiveness, and what has been looked upon by some as a lack of decision in his character was in reality the deliberation of a wise and cautious judgment, which subsequent events almost always vindicated. He had a remarkable command of language, and many of his public speeches are literary gems in their beauty and purity of expression. His life, both public and private, affords an example that we cannot fail to admire, and which we may do well to emulate, for here we see a man who, by unvarying integrity and honesty of purpose, rose from the humble walks of life to the highest public office both in the city and in the State, and acquitted himself honorably and creditably in every position in which he was placed.

Alderman Barry said:

Mr. Chairman, I also rise to second the resolutions in memory of Mr. Gaston, who has in the past served as governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and as mayor of our beloved city. Many a young man who has been struggling to gain a foothold in the legal profession in this city will testify in the warmest and strongest terms to the friendly assistance which Mr. Gaston was always willing and eager to extend. In poor young men he always took the deepest and most kindly interest. When it fell to those who were studying law to have a

case in regard to which they desired a knowledge of the inner law, if they called at his office and desired his aid and advice it was always cheerfully and cordially extended to them. Many of the bright lights in the legal profession in our city, many of those who were once poor, struggling boys, owe to Mr. Gaston a great deal in the way of help. Kindly and fatherly as he always was, everybody knew him. He was humble, and glad to meet all. If any one desired to address a conversation to him, meeting him on the street, he was always ready to listen. He was one of those men in public life who looked upon those whom he met as making up a combination of his kind friends, not recognizing the ability alone of any one man. We also remember that dreadful night of Nov. 9, 1872, — the time of the great fire, — when he was mayor of our good city, and when the citizens assembled at half-past seven in the mayor's office. While that great fire raged and swept through our business district, burning and destroying some $80,000,000 of property, he stood at the helm of the ship, called in the citizens, and remained here in the mayor's office — receiving advice, giving instructions, directing, counselling — staying here, as I have noticed in the daily press, for a week, not taking off his clothes and going to bed in that time, simply taking what little rest he could obtain from an occasional short nap on the office lounge. That showed the interest he had in our good city. We owe also to him, as a good citizen, great praise for his persistent endeavors in behalf of those who desired public parks. His strong efforts, Mr. Chairman, I might say, had as much to do with bringing about the

public park system as those of any one individual in our community. He was a citizen first and foremost at all times, and I hope, Mr. Chairman, as he has gone the road we all must go sooner or later, that his life hereafter will be blest with all that is good, for he certainly deserves it all.

Alderman DEVER said:

I deem it an honor, Mr. Chairman, to represent a locality in this Board where the illustrious career of our great ex-governor and ex-mayor was commenced. I know of no statesman in the list of those who were contemporary with him whose record was more pure, whose service was more highly appreciated, and whose public life was so illustrious. Living at a time amongst our people when the members of the great party to which he belonged were almost in a helpless minority, he was always true to its principles, and his record as a public man will ever stand as an example for the youth of our State and city to emulate.

The resolutions were adopted by a unanimous rising vote.

Alderman HALLSTRAM offered an order —

That a joint special committee, to consist of the Chairman and four other members of the Board of Aldermen, with such as the Common Council may join, be appointed to attend the funeral of the late Hon. WILLIAM GASTON, formerly mayor of Boston; and that said committee be authorized to procure a suitable floral

tribute; all expenses incurred by said committee to be charged to the Contingent Fund of the City Council.

Passed. Sent down.

The Chairman appointed as said committee, on the part of the Board, Aldermen Sanford, Lee, Dever, Barry, and Hallstram.

Adjourned at 12.33 P.M., on motion of Alderman FOLSOM.

---

## THE COMMON COUNCIL.

The members of the Common Council met in the Council Chamber at 12.35 P.M., President O'BRIEN in the chair and a quorum present.

The Clerk read the call for the meeting, which was placed on file.

### PAPERS FROM THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN.

1. The City Council of Boston have learned with deep sorrow and regret of the decease of Hon. WILLIAM GASTON, one of Massachusetts' most distinguished jurists and statesmen, formerly mayor of Roxbury and for two years mayor of Boston, later the honored chief executive of our Commonwealth.

His illustrious career, exemplified as it has been by a conscientious love and devotion to the interests of his city and State, has endeared him to the honor and esteem of all our citizens.

*Resolved*, That we take this occasion to inscribe upon the records of our government sentiments of our highest appreciation for the purity of his character, the progres-

sive and liberal administration which he rendered our city and State, and the broad and noble public record he left behind him.

*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted to the family of the deceased.

The question came on the passage of the resolutions in concurrence.

Mr. Smith, of Ward 18, said:

Mr. President, the death of Governor Gaston removes from our midst one of the most prominent men in our State — one who has served the people faithfully and well, a man who in whatever position he was placed never wavered in his duty or flinched from the performance of what he believed to be just and right. It was during his occupancy of the position of executive of our Commonwealth that an event occurred important in the history of the Union, when, as the Democrat governor of Massachusetts, he welcomed within its hospitable borders the Republican governor of South Carolina; and all who are conversant with the occasion will readily recall the fact that the welcome to the Old Bay State was characteristic of the man — graceful, cordial, and dignified. It was my pleasure and privilege to know him; and I well remember the occasion of our last meeting, about two years ago. It was in a gathering where were congregated many of his former bosom friends, and the conversation was upon their ages. Governor Gaston's was placed as about fifty-eight, and I can recall the charm of his manner and his kindly smile as he replied,

"I only wish you were correct." With his great mental powers unbroken and his brilliant intellect undimmed, he has passed away from our midst, but the people whom he served so long and so well will ever and always hold his dear name in their loving recollection.

Mr. CALLAHAN, of Ward 12, said:

It is well, sir, that the representatives of the citizens of this great municipality should be called upon at broad high noon to say a few words in memory of their sacred dead. I would desire, sir, very much that time for preparation should have been given me to say well-chosen and fitting words in memoriam of a great man. I have to say, sir, that, much unlike the taking-off of the great Roman emperor who was stabbed by the swords of avarice, jealousy, and ambition, this great dead of ours has been called by the great Governor of all to that state for which he has seemed to Him best fitted. A rehearsal of the great character, the positions of honor, the great deeds achieved and the greatness of the man, would be improper for me at this time to attempt, after what you have already heard read. But, sir, I cannot refrain from saying that it is meet and just, right and fitting, that the members of the city government, representatives of that municipality of which he was once the great and executive head, should have the honor of testifying to their appreciation of his life, character, and services. And, sir, a man whose great ability has made him the mayor of two distinct cities and the governor of one great Commonwealth is certainly so deserving

of commemoration that it is well that this hall should resound with words of eloquence from a better tongue than mine to preach his great glories and his worth. But, sir, I should not be content if I did not rise and say that it was his great popularity that made him mayor of Roxbury. It was his great ability that later made him mayor of Boston, and finally placed him at the head of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts — one of the highest honors within the gift of the people of the State. Not by any great particular faction, but at the beck and call of the people of the State, was this great governor called to exercise the duties of administration over the people of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. As a man of great popularity and ability, commingled with a good, generous heart, and a spirit of broad citizenship, both in social and civil affairs, and as a highly respected member of the Massachusetts bar, we do well in honoring to-day this our great dead. Yea, we may well say that our loss is great, but we hope it is his gain.

The resolutions were adopted in concurrence by a unanimous rising vote.

2. *Ordered*, That a joint special committee, to consist of the Chairman and four other members of the Board of Aldermen, with such as the Common Council may join, be appointed to attend the funeral of the late Hon. William Gaston, formerly mayor of Boston; and that said committee be authorized to procure a suitable floral tribute; all expenses incurred by said committee to be charged to the Contingent Fund of the City Council.

Passed in concurrence, and the President appointed as said committee, on the part of the Council, Messrs. O'Brien, of Ward 6; Briggs, of 11; Collins, of 3; Smith, of 18; Wise, of 20; Shaw, of 17; Bradley, of 2; and Holden, of 11.

On motion of Mr. SHAW, of Ward 17, the President of the Council was added to the committee.

Adjourned, on motion of Mr. ROURKE, of Ward 6, at 12.47 P.M.

# MEMORIAL SERVICES

# MEMORIAL SERVICES.

The committee appointed for the purpose soon began their arrangements for the memorial services, and were fortunate in securing Hon. Thomas J. Gargan, a long-time friend of Mr. Gaston, to pronounce the eulogy. For the reason that Mr. Gaston was a resident of Roxbury during the greater part of his public career, and many of his old friends resided there, it was deemed advisable to hold the service in that section of the city, and the Dudley Street Opera House was accordingly engaged for the purpose, the date selected being June 13. Rev. Albert Walkley, of Brighton, accepted the committee's invitation to officiate as chaplain, and Rev. Minot J. Savage also consented to prepare and deliver a poem upon the occasion.

Invitations were extended to the Mayor and City Council, the Governor and Lieutenant-Governor and Executive Council, the press, and a number of prominent citizens. The hall was tastefully decorated, and plants and flowers adorned the stage and speaker's desk.

It was expected that Mayor Matthews would preside, but he was unavoidably detained by other public business, and in his absence the duty was assumed and gracefully performed by Alderman John F. Dever, Chairman of the Committee.

The musical numbers were furnished by the Clover Quartette, directed by James M. McLaughlin, and composed of the following members: namely, Michael J. Dwyer, John R. Campbell, Edward J. McHugh, and Thomas E. Clifford.

The exercises commeneed about eight o'clock, by the opening remarks of the Chairman, as follows:

## REMARKS BY ALDERMAN DEVER.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we had expected that His Honor the Mayor would be present this evening, but unfortunately he was detained, and late this evening sent me word to that effect.

The city government of Boston, through this committee, have invited you to be present this evening to participate in the exercises in commemoration of the life of our dearly beloved friend, the Hon. William Gaston. It is fitting that these exercises should be held in Roxbury, the former home of Gaston, and for that reason the committee selected this hall as the only available one in which to hold such exercises. We will begin the exercises by the quartette singing the opening anthem.

The anthem "Tarry with me, O my Saviour," was then sung by the quartette.

At the elose of the anthem prayer was offered by the ehaplain, as follows:

## PRAYER BY REV. ALBERT WALKLEY.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father and Father of all men, we thank Thee that in Thy heart there is no distinction, but that Thou lovest all Thy children. We bless Thy Holy Name, for we are not to measure ourselves by our sins or our short-comings, but by our ability to do the best that is in us, by our purest longings, our highest hopes, by our best thought in our best

moments. We beseech Thee, Almighty Father, not to measure our race by the low and depraved in it, but by the noble, true, self-sacrificing love. We thank Thee for our great men. We thank Thee that the symbol of our religion is not the sword, but the cross, and that Thy service is the way to salvation, and that we will perform the most faithful service of God through serving man. We thank Thee for our country, our Commonwealth, and our city. We ask Thee to bless Thy servants whom Thou hast appointed and we have elected to the offices about us. Inspire them with a broad sympathy, large ideas, and true conception of the world and our humanity. Help us to feel that the largest service we can render our country is to be true to the larger interests of the world, and enlighten us to think that by injuring another we can do no good service to ourselves. Make us feel that all humanity's interests are one, and help us to feel both as a Commonwealth and a nation, that to do an injury to another is a deeper injury to ourselves. Enlighten our minds to Thy truth, that we cannot legislate contrary to Thy eternal laws; that we cannot legislate ourselves into character, happiness, or prosperity, but only through obedience to Thy laws will we reach the foundation, which is love of God and love of man. Grant, Merciful Father, that we may see the sinfulness of all things that create or foster a bad spirit, a spirit of sectional or sectarian bitterness, and touch us with a deep sense of brotherhood to all men. Help us to consecrate ourselves to Thy service and the service of our country, and may our consecration be such that it will be beyond price and beyond favor. Bless the

devoted sons and true men gone before and yet with us. Help us to do our duty to the generations rising into our places. Help us to rejoice in the progress going on, and to glorify Thy name that our world is to be better in the future, that we are to occupy greater places in time to come. Aid us to do our part to forward this nobler life. Bless our schools of all kinds that mean the enlightenment of the minds and the formation of true character. May we rejoice in the good in them, and have our eyes open to their faults. Grant that they may turn out men and women of highest aims and noble individuality in life. May our Commonwealth be a leader in all the truest and best of civilization. May its ears be ever open to the cry of the oppressed and wronged. In the clash between men, may it stand by real, true justice, and by that highest law which is above and better than all constitutions and statutes. Fill us with faith, let no darkness cloud our faith in our government of the people. Give us strong faith in God and a strong faith in ourselves. Give us a strong faith in man, and help us to believe in him. Grant that we may feel deep in our hearts the one great purpose, the one great object of our humanity. May the lessons of integrity, of industry, of faithfulness, and of firmness and earnestness, which come to us from the life of our fellows and Thy child whose memory we indeed honor, come not in vain to us, but come to engraft themselves into our lives, that they may bring forth fruit to thine honor and glory. Amen.

After the prayer a tenor solo, "Come unto Me," was sung by Michael J. Dwyer.

Then followed the poem composed for the occasion and read by Rev. Minot J. Savage.

## THE MEMORIAL POEM.

I do not see the age of gold
  Shine in the backward distance far,
Nor fancy any days of old
  Were better than the days that are.

I rather think each added year
  An added stair up which we climb —
That every age but brings more near
  The glory of the better time.

But yet th' ideal is far away;
  Still lures and vanishes our dream;
The promise of the perfect day
  Seems like the will-o'-the-wisp's false gleam.

For men have but in part outgrown
  The wolf, the tiger, and the snake;
Still might and cunning call their own
  What from the weak the strong ones take.

"The rulers shall be ministers,"
  "The great shall serve," the Master said;
But still, too oft, ambition blurs
  The lives of truth and love instead.

Men climb to office o'er the weak,
  They use their place and power for self;
And when the people's plain rights speak
  The rulers' ears are stuffed with pelf.

Cliques, trusts, combines, oft turn aside
The purpose of the common weal,
While demagogue physicians hide
The social wounds they ought to heal.

So, when a man does walk our streets,
A plain and honest citizen,
Whom all men trust, whom honor greets
And lifts to leadership of men;

And when he fills each place of power
With thought but for the public health,
When never one official hour
His hands besmirched with public wealth;

When mayor, governor, he still
Remained the simple man with men,
Then Massachusetts, with a will,
Crowns with her love such citizen!

Such, Gaston, such a man wast thou!
True to thy party, "the machine"
Possessed no power thy head to bow
To what was petty or unclean.

Clean hand, warm heart, clear head, and all
Were ours, to execute or plan;
The same in home, street, capitol,
Ever the simple, manly man.

O Boston, city of our pride!
O Massachusetts, our loved State!
Thy faults we ever seek to hide,
We for thy perfect glory wait!

When may we trust will come the day
When all thy sons may proudly feel
Our Beacon Dome reflects no ray
Save honor from our Commonweal?

When all thy sons, in private place
Or in official posts, shall hold
That love, truth, justice, should efface
All selfish schemes, all greed of gold!

In that glad day when we shall write,
Of honored names, the shining list
Of those who fought the honest fight,
Then Gaston's name shall not be missed!

After the reading of the poem, a solo, "There is a Green Hill far Away," was sung by Mr. CLIFFORD.

The eulogist was then introduced by the Chairman, as follows:

Ladies and Gentlemen, in selecting the gentleman for the purpose of delivering to-night a eulogy upon our late friend, we looked around through the city of Boston to find one who was near and dear to our late Governor and late mayor. After looking for some time we selected a gentleman who needs no introduction to you, and one who is well qualified to pronounce the eulogy upon our departed friend. I now take great pleasure in presenting to you the Hon. THOMAS J. GARGAN.

Mr. Gargan's eulogy occupied about an hour in its delivery, and was a fitting and faithful tribute to the memory of the departed, and was heartily applauded by the audience.

At the close of the eulogy the quartette sang the anthem "In Memoriam," and afterwards the benediction was pronounced by the chaplain, as follows:

## BENEDICTION.

Almighty God, may we not only praise the dead, but imitate them wherein they were true. And may we not only honor those passed on, but those living in our midst, who are true and brave. Now may our Father's richest blessing rest upon you forever. Amen.

# THE EULOGY

BY

## THOMAS J. GARGAN

# THE EULOGY.

At the opening of this year we said the last prayer and sang the last requiem over all that was mortal of our honored and illustrious citizen, William Gaston. The pulpit and the press joined in paying their tribute mingled with love and sorrow. His brethren of the bar, at which for so many years he was a distinguished leader, have spoken fittingly by words and resolutions spread upon the records of the courts. The city of Boston, over which he presided as chief magistrate with that simple dignity which always distinguished him, has lamented a faithful servant. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, through both its Houses, has added her words of praise for the governor who maintained the high character of the supreme executive of the Commonwealth ; yet the people of Boston felt that they ought not to permit the memory of a citizen so faithful to every trust, and so beloved, to pass into history without additional public recognition. Therefore the City Council of Boston has decreed this commemoration.

After hearing as you have the story of his life told so tenderly and so eloquently by all that have spoken of him, how can I hope to add anything to what has been said so well? and as I appear here to-day

to answer your summons I feel abashed as I stand before you, for I know that only your sympathy and love for the lamented dead give you patience to listen to my repetition of the story of his life. I could wish that some elder brother of the bar had been chosen to speak of Mr. Gaston as he knew him through his life of more than three-score years and ten, or that I possessed that indefinable secret power which we call eloquence that magnetizes men's minds and touches men's hearts as did the lyre of Orpheus of old. The custom of honoring men who have distinguished themselves in life by solemn observance is natural, wise, and just. Yet these tributes which we offer to departed worth are not for the dead, but for the living. We can add nothing to the peace and joy of the good man who has finished his course on earth and passed into a blessed immortality. Yet expressions and memorials elevate those from whom they emanate; they cause us to pause in our struggle for wealth and honors, and lift us to a higher world of thought. If all the surroundings here, the religious exercises, the solemn strains of the music, the communion of thought between those who knew the nobleness of our friend's life, shall plant the seed of a deep emotion that will fructify and ripen into noble actions, then we may congratulate ourselves upon a well-spent day.

It is peculiarly fitting that these exercises should be held here in the Roxbury District of Boston; and I am not unmindful of the difficulties of my task when I attempt to speak to you, his earliest

neighbors and his latest friends, — you who knew him in his young life, you who saw his humble beginning and who followed him with tenderness, affection, and pride to its very close, sympathizing with his every effort, sharing with him his sorrows and disappointments, and rejoicing when success and honors crowned his career. Carlyle tells us that the life of the humblest individual is interesting and instructive. How much more so the life of one who has achieved fame and honor! We are interested in every inquiry that concerns his personality. How interesting is that brief letter of Cicero in which he described how Cæsar dined with him, how "he ate and drank without reserve, sumptuously indeed and with due preparation;" and not only that, "but with good conversation, well digested and seasoned, and if you ask cheerfully;" how the guest was not one to whom you would say "Pray come to me in the same manner when you return," that "once was enough;" how "there was nothing of importance in their conversation, but a great deal of liberal learning;" how "in short he was highly pleased and enjoyed himself." How much there is revealed to us in this letter of the greatest orator and the most renowned general of the ancient Romans! So we desire to know something more of those who become distinguished than the mere fact that they existed. We want to know something of their inner personality, to know if they shared with us the joys and sorrows of our common humanity. We want to learn something of their origin and ancestry, to see what traits, if any, they have inherited and preserved.

The Gaston family may be traced to France, where Jean Gaston was born about the year 1600. He was a Huguenot, and is said to have been banished from France on account of his religion; his property was confiscated, and we find him in Scotland, where he was supported by remittances from his brothers and family in France, who were stanch Catholics. As he was unmarried when he went to Scotland, he probably married a Scotch woman, as we find his sons John, William, and Alexander living in Scotland, from which they fled on account of religious persecution to the north of Ireland sometime between the years 1622 and 1668. John Gaston, the grandson of the French Huguenot, had three sons born in Ireland — William born about 1680 at Caranleigh, Cloughwater, where he lived all his days, and died in the year 1770; the other two sons, Alexander and John, came to America. Thus we see one generation of the Gaston family was born in Ireland. John Gaston, the great-grandfather of Governor Gaston, came from Ireland to America and settled in New England, joining the separatists' colony in Connecticut, and was a freeman of Voluntown at the organization of the town in 1736 and 1737. Tradition states that the Gastons originally landed at Marblehead, Massachusetts. Alexander Gaston, father of William Gaston, married Olive Dunlap, of Plainfield, and, as his second wife, Kezia Arnold, of Burrilville, Rhode Island. They lived at Killingly, Connecticut, where William Gaston, whose memory we meet to honor, was born, of the second marriage, Oct. 3, 1820. It was an eventful year in the history of the

United States: it was the year of the great contest and the first important debate after the adoption of the Federal Constitution, when Missouri applied for admission to the Union, and thus was begun that tumultuous agitation on the slavery question culminating forty-one years later in the greatest civil war of modern times — a war which threatened the destruction of our government, lasting four years, resulting in the triumph of the Union armies and the emancipation of four millions of slaves.

In Mr. Gaston's ancestry were joined the characteristics of the French Huguenot, the Irish patriot of the north of Ireland, the "Mayflower" pilgrims, and the followers of Roger Williams. We are not surprised, therefore, to find in William Gaston the characteristics of a strong man. The crest of the Gaston family, as given by Fairbairn, is the owl, the bird of wisdom. We do not attach much importance in our day to crests, as they are undoubtedly of barbarous origin, — the rude attempts of untutored minds to express ideas before men were able to read and write, which they did by pictures or symbols. The North American Indians pictured their families, describing their traits as the family of the bear, the wolf, the beaver, and the fox; yet I suppose very few New England families would be proud to claim ancestry from an Algonquin squaw, as the mother under the Indian law was the head of the family; and I doubt if their early European ancestors were any more noble, virtuous, or brave than our American savages. Yet it is not without significance that the Gastons

were pictured as noted for wisdom, a strong characteristic of our friend. The other branch of the Gaston family that emigrated from Ireland to America settled in North Carolina, where Dr. Alexander Gaston, an ardent patriot in the Revolutionary struggle, was shot by the British loyalists, August 20, 1781. His son William Gaston became a member of Congress, and afterwards judge of the Supreme Court of his State. The father of Governor Gaston was a merchant in Connecticut, well known for his sterling integrity and strong force of character.

William Gaston gave early promise, and displayed the qualities which so distinguished him in after life. Those who knew him in boyhood speak of him as a studious lad, eager to acquire knowledge, yet active in the out-door sports so enjoyed by boys of strong and vigorous constitutions. He attended the academy at Brooklyn, Connecticut, and fitted for college at Plainfield Academy, and at the age of fifteen entered Brown University. It may be that his mother, being a Rhode Island woman and a follower of Roger Williams, had her way, as most mothers do, in directing the course of her son's education. His classmates recall his modesty, his reserved manner and quiet dignity. A member of the Suffolk bar told me with much feeling of the kindness of the reception given him when he entered Brown as a freshman. Mr. Gaston being then in the junior class, said he, was a most lovable boy, with a noble and manly nature; always studious, from childhood he pursued his studies with earnestness and zest. Contact with his fellows stimu-

lated his ambition and gave him confidence in his own ability to enter the battle of life and contest for place and honor. Young Gaston maintained a high rank in college and graduated with honors in the class of 1840. Although Brown University was at that time strongly denominational and many of its graduates entered the Baptist ministry, he chose for his life-work the law—a judicious choice, as time has shown. After his graduation the young student left the peaceful atmosphere of his alma mater and sought the advantages which Boston then offered to a student of the law, first entering the office of Judge Francis Hillard, of Roxbury, and continuing and completing his studies under Benjamin R. Curtis, who was afterwards elevated to the bench of the Supreme Court of the United States, and who dissented from the opinion of the court in the famous Dred Scott decision. After four years of patient and diligent study young Gaston was admitted to the bar in 1844, and in this Roxbury District in 1846 he opened his office for the practice of his profession. There was something about him that attracted men to him. One of the members of the Norfolk county bar, a life-long friend of his, told me of his first appearance in court: somewhat shy; though always neat in apparel, indifferent to fashion; so thoroughly absorbed was he in his work that personal adornment gave him very little concern. In his first case he was pitted against one of the leaders of the bar, and many feared for the black-haired boy, as they termed him; but he had prepared himself so thoroughly and fought for his client with so much earnestness that

his success was assured, and he soon took his place as one of the leaders of the bar in Norfolk county. It was a bar noted for men of ability: Ezra Wilkinson, afterwards judge of the Superior Court, and John J. Clark, and Asaph Churchill were the elder leaders, and their successors were William Gaston and Waldo Colburn, whom William Gaston subsequently elevated to the Superior Court bench. These two men were upon one side or the other of every important case in the county, for a quarter of a century. As his reputation increased, he sought the wider field offered him at the Suffolk County bar, and very soon was in the front rank of the profession.

Mr. Gaston had the elements in him that command success at the bar — tact, talent, magnetism, earnestness, integrity, and untiring industry. Of all positions in life, the lawyer, and especially the advocate, has the least opportunity to pass for more than his worth merits; he has constantly the search-light of criticism turned fully upon him, and opposing counsel is searching with microscopic eye for any flaw or defects in his pleadings or in his argument. The court will detect any sophistry or fallacy, and the jurors and spectators, with their sound common-sense, generally form a correct estimate of a man's worth; and in their judgments I have a strong, abiding faith, notwithstanding the sneers and criticisms of those who, by the accident of birth or fortune, fill positions which they think entitle them to be called the better class. One who can stand such tests must be a man of extraordinary ability, and only unremitting toil and constant

study will enable him to hold a prominent place. He must be alert, prepared to meet every onset of his opponent, and to respond at a moment's notice; and often at the end of a long trial in which body and mind are subjected to the severest strain, without time for thought, when the last word of the evidence is spoken, begin his closing argument for his client. During his career at the bar, Mr. Gaston was in many important cases, and met as antagonists all the leaders of the bar of his time. Some of Mr. Gaston's notable arguments were the arguments for the respondents in the celebrated Andover case, for Walter Shanley before the committee of the Massachusetts Legislature; also, before a similar committee, the arguments for the Danvers Hospital and on the sale of the second-mortgage bonds of the New York and New England Railroad by the Commonwealth — arguments showing much research, ability, and learning. Mr. Gaston was also frequently before the full bench of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, arguing many important cases during the years of his busy life; but his forte was in the trial of causes before juries, and there he was at his best; with an active and acute mind, he was one of the best cross-examiners at the bar; formidable when for the defence, and almost invincible when he was for the plaintiff and had the closing argument; always impressive and earnest, rising at times to a high pitch of eloquence. Mr. Gaston was very reluctant to enter upon the trial of a case. He hesitated and gave those who did not know him the impression that he was timid; yet when he began the trial of a cause, being in

it, the opposing counsel might well beware, for he found in him an antagonist worthy of his steel, fertile in resources, full of enthusiasm, making his client's cause his own, and so thoroughly imbued that he firmly believed that there was only one side to the case, resenting any reflection upon his client as a personal matter. This thorough belief in the honesty of his case and his great earnestness was one of his most marked characteristics, and to which he was in no small measure indebted for his success.

I am aware that some critics have said he was not a great lawyer; so said the contemporaries of Erskine, and they said of Choate that he was a mere rhetorician. We do not claim that he was a book-worm, or that he was versed in what is called the red-letter literature of the law. I do claim that he was a sound thinker, that he had developed the keen practical instincts and sober appreciation of the realities of life that come to men by experience and contact with the world. We know that every man has his limitations, and I have thought that some of the men who criticised Mr. Gaston had so loaded their brains with precedents and other men's ideas as to leave them little, if any, power remaining for original thinking. That he was a lawyer of signal ability is proven by the records of the courts, where, in his day, he met every leading lawyer of his time and scored his full measure of victories. And I think it can be justly said of him there were few, very few, men his equal as an advocate in the Commonwealth, during his years of active practice. The younger members of the bar had for him a genuine admiration and a

special regard; they not only admired him, but they loved him for his uniform courtesy and kindness to them. He was always approachable and ready to give his advice and offer his services to a younger brother at the bar, often asking and receiving no other fee or reward than the grateful appreciation of his debtor. All his brethren of the bar who knew him testify to his spotless integrity, the absolute purity of his life, to his great wisdom, his unremitting labor, and his abundant kindness and courtesy. He has been commended by his associates to the younger men of the bar who are coming to the front, for the absolute fidelity to duty which marked his career as a lawyer. But the fame of Mr. Gaston is not limited by his triumphs at the bar: his fellow-citizens, early recognizing his abilities, called him to many positions of public trust and honor. He was chosen city solicitor of Roxbury, filling that important office to the satisfaction of the citizens for a term of five years, when he was elected by the people of Roxbury to serve in the Massachusetts Legislature in 1853, by the Whig party.

Mr. Gaston was never an office-seeker, yet he believed it to be his duty to respond to the call of his fellow-citizens, and this he did from the highest and purest motives, sacrificing his private interests for the common weal. He was reëlected to the Legislature by his party in the year 1854, but in 1855 and 1856 came that outbreak of fanaticism promulgated by secret, oath-bound organizations, of which the present A.P.A. movement is a feeble imitation. Mr. Gaston during that trying time proved himself an American of Americans.

The disturbers of the public peace and the enemies of the American Union, whether wearing the disguise of native Americans or masquerading as Know-nothings or A.P.A.'s, found in him at all times an outspoken, relentless, and determined opponent. The time-servers and the trimming politicians joined the new proscriptive party. Not so with Mr. Gaston: his voice rang out a clear bugle-note in defence of the rights of all citizens under the law, and he took a manly stand, proclaiming the constitutional rights of all men to absolute freedom of religion. The weak men, the drift-wood, floated with the current; it required a strong man to breast the tide of bigotry and intolerance during that era of fanaticism. In the emergency Mr. Gaston proved true to the cardinal principles of our government, faithful, among the few leaders, to the great charter of American liberty. The citizens of Roxbury recognized the wisdom of the words of Burke — that "When bad men combine the good must associate, else they will fall one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle." And to their lasting credit, a combination of conscientious men of the Whig and Democratic parties triumphantly reëlected Mr. Gaston to the Legislature in 1856, in opposition to the Know-nothing candidate. Adopted citizens and the sons of adopted citizens cannot too highly honor his memory for his noble and patriotic stand and his manly defence of their just rights and religious liberties during those gloomy times. It requires courage to advocate an unpopular cause, even though it be the cause of justice and of truth.

"Then to side with truth is noble when we share her wretched crust,
Ere her cause bring fame and profit and 'tis prosperous to be just;
Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside,
Doubting, in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified."

He fought manfully in the Legislature against all the obnoxious measures proposed to abridge the rights of citizens of any class or creed, and received at the close of the session the warm approval of his constituents. Modestly retiring to his profession, his fellow-citizens of Roxbury called upon him during those eventful years of 1861 and 1862 to preside as chief magistrate of the city of Roxbury. Slavery, which had been threatening the peace and security of the nation since that great debate in 1820 over the admission of the State of Missouri to the Union, now threw down the gauge of battle, and the whole country was startled from its fancied security by the firing upon Fort Sumter, in April, 1861, by the men of South Carolina. In that hour men forgot all party lines, remembered only that the supremacy of the government was threatened. Mr. Gaston, true to his instincts and convictions, was enthusiastically patriotic; his voice and his influence were exerted; he was earnest and active in raising volunteers for the Union army.

In 1862, having been reëlected mayor, he addressed the City Council of Roxbury in these words, which glowed with patriotic fervor: "The year which is before us must be productive of events of great national importance, the consequences of which must visit us all. We have been aroused from the deep and tranquil slumbers of peace to the

roar and tumult of arms. We are in the midst of a struggle involving national life, and also involving the hopes and destinies of more than thirty millions of people. On the issue of this struggle depend the highest temporal interests of us all. Beyond a confiding faith in the ultimate success of our cause, we have nothing to guide us but uncertain speculations. A week, a day, an hour, of the future is impenetrable. Here human wisdom finds itself at fault, here no ray of light shines upon the darkness of human comprehension. It is therefore eminently proper for us, as a Christian people who have so long enjoyed the richest benefactions of God, bowing now submissively to his will, to invoke his blessings upon our efforts to sustain a government upon the continuance of which our temporal hopes so largely depend. The duties of every citizen are now a hundred fold greater than in times of peace. Patriotism can now find no excuse in lethargy or in inaction. A man to be worth anything must be awake, decided, and energetic. He who slumbers had better be dead. He who doubts had better be a traitor, for open treason is better than dead patriotism. The courage which rises with every obstacle is the courage which prevails. There may be days of darkness before us, but beyond those days of darkness must be days of light, and seeing glimpses of the light which is beyond the clouds, let us labor, hope, and persevere." What a sublime faith was his! While he thus cherished this profound faith in our government of the people, he never flattered the groundlings, nor pandered to their passions.

He was absolutely fearless in the discharge of his public duties. Recognizing to the fullest extent the responsibility of his public trust and his duty to the people at home, Mr. Gaston felt he owed a duty to the citizen soldiers of Roxbury in the army, the flower of our youth, who went forth in 1861 and 1862 to fight in the war for the preservation of the Union. He journeyed several times to the front, visiting the camps, the battle-fields, and the hospitals, in his tender solicitude for the welfare of Roxbury's quota. Nor did his kindness and conscientiousness stop here: he felt it a duty to look to the welfare of the families of these citizen soldiers, and he brought home from the seat of war words of comfort and joy to the mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters who were obliged to endure so silently and patiently during those years of terrible civil war, suffering, as only women can suffer, for those whom they love and honor, and in comparison to whose love all the love of man is as dry and hard as the remainder biscuit. He received their grateful thanks and earnest prayers, and the women of Roxbury still cherish his memory with tender affection.

It is related of Mr. Gaston by one of his oldest friends, who was associated with him in the Roxbury government during the war, that on one occasion he went with Mr. Gaston to the seat of war to look out for the comfort of the Roxbury soldiers in the hospitals. Mr. Gaston had a pass from Surgeon-General Hammond, of the United States army, permitting him to visit all hospitals. They came one morning, after one of the great battles, to one of the

hospitals where there was a number of Roxbury soldiers. Mayor Gaston politely informed the sentinel that he had a pass to enter. The sentinel rudely replied that he did not care if he had, that he could not enter, and ordered him to move on. The surgeon in charge came out, and in a still more peremptory manner ordered him off, and threatened him with arrest; but Mr. Gaston firmly held his ground, and said to the surgeon, "I have a pass here from the Surgeon-General of the United States Army, authorizing me to visit all the hospitals of the army, and unless your authority is superior to his, I intend to enter this hospital." The surgeon quailed before his firmness and determination, allowed him to enter, and was profuse in his apologies and assiduous in his attentions. I think this illustrates a strong trait in Mr. Gaston's character. He fully recognized the doctrine of authority, but when he knew he was right and had authority on his side, no power on earth could swerve him from the performance of duty. Through all the vicissitudes of the war, he never faltered in his devotion to his country or to the Union. In the darkest hours, he had an abiding faith in the ultimate triumph of our cause; dire disaster in the field did not shake him. He was

> "As constant as the northern star,
> Of whose true, fixed, and rested quality
> There is no fellow in the firmament."

At the close of his term of office as mayor of Roxbury, Mr. Gaston returned to his law office and was engrossed in the practice of his profession until 1868, when he was elected to the State Senate of Massachu-

setts, where he was a conspicuous leader on the Democratic side; but his mind was so eminently fair that he arose above party upon any measure that he believed was for the benefit of all the people of the Commonweath. When the union of Roxbury and Boston was contemplated, he was one of the commissioners appointed by the City Council of Roxbury and Boston, respectively, on the union of the two cities, and earnestly recommended the immediate consummation of the proposed union. The same qualities that endeared Mr. Gaston to the people of Roxbury, his adaptation for the management of public affairs and his sterling integrity, soon attracted the attention of the voters of the enlarged municipality, and he was called to the mayoralty of Boston in the year 1871. In his inaugural address he recommended and secured the adoption of the law creating the Board of Commissioners for the Control and Management of the Sinking-Funds, and was an earnest and persistent advocate for the establishment of a system of public parks for Boston — a measure which has since been adopted and amplified, promising us in the near future the most beautiful system of public parks yet devised. He also urged during his mayoralty the creation of the Department of Public Printing for the city, and a more comprehensive plan for surveying and laying out streets — a measure which was adopted some eighteen years later, taking the form of the Board of Survey. During the latter part of his administration as mayor, in November, 1872, occurred the disastrous fire in Boston, occasioned by a combination of causes. It was an eventful Saturday night in

Boston. Mr. Gaston, appreciating the gravity of the situation, proceeded early in the night to the City Hall, where he was besieged by excited and anxious citizens, whose fears and interests swayed them in many directions. A number of citizens wanted the mayor to blow up with gunpowder or some other explosives a number of buildings to stay the progress of the conflagration, and because he refused he was accused of vacillation and timidity; but he was never firmer in his life.

Now that the smoke of that conflagration has passed away and we can view the question with our judgments rather than our prejudices, we know that Mr. Gaston was right He stood firmly and determinedly on this ground: "Gentlemen, show me any authority that I have for such a proceeding and I will consider it." He knew as a lawyer that he had no right to interfere; and the courts of this Commonwealth, by their subsequent decision, fully vindicated Mr. Gaston. His fellow-citizens are fully convinced that they were fortunate in having a man with so much discretion and judgment as mayor of the city of Boston on that disastrous night. At the expiration of his term of office he was commended by the press and people as a man "preëminently qualified for the duties of the office, which required wisdom, discretion, firmness, and courage when needed, combined with the most exalted integrity and unselfish devotion to the honor, welfare, and prosperity of the city."

Mr. Gaston was permitted to remain in private life but a brief period. Massachusetts, which prior to 1874 had elected a Republican governor ever since the foundation

of the party — a party organized for the protection of the rights and the personal liberty of all citizens — found itself agitated upon the question of the personal liberty of the citizen, on the question of temperance, or, more strictly speaking, total abstinence, as enforced by prohibition. We all know that law has not an atom of strength unless it has an enlightened public opinion behind it to sustain it. Local public opinion in many places refused to enforce or sustain this prohibitory law, and the State Legislature thought it was stronger than public opinion, and created a State police-force far removed from the people to enforce this obnoxious law. The people of Massachusetts, a State where the town meeting originated, strongly favor local self-government. They will bear oppression for a time, but sooner or later there comes a reaction. The Republican party in the State experienced such a reaction in the autumn of 1874. The State constabulary became odious to the people, it was a force too far removed from the people; and the revolt came, and the opposition selected Mr. Gaston as their candidate for governor, to lead in the campaign against centralized government as exemplified in a police too far removed from the control of the local authorities. Upon that issue Mr. Gaston was triumphantly elected governor for the year 1875. I say upon that issue, for I believe if it were not for the existence of the State police no Democrat could have been elected; and for the first time since the birth of the Republican party a Democratic governor sat in the chair of the chief executive of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. His instincts and training were

in favor of government by the people; he saw that the tendency of the Republican party was towards centralization of power, and he recommended to the Legislature the immediate repeal of the act creating the force known as the State constabulary — a measure which the Legislature adopted. He no doubt realized, as most men do who think at all, that we gain nothing by shifting responsibility from cities and towns to the State — we only aggravate the evil by placing the remedy for corruption and bad administration too far away from us. We must feel the effects of bad government. So soon as we realize that men of brains and influence, with great interests, cannot neglect their most important duty, and cannot remain silent or indifferent in municipal affairs, we shall have taken the first great step towards remedying many of the evils which exist in cities to-day, and prevent many of the dangers threatening the existence of our republican form of government. Mr. Gaston also urged in his message the repeal of the prohibitory law, and the substitution of a judicious license system. That recommendation was favorably received, and a license law was enacted by the Legislature of 1875, and still remains the policy of the Commonwealth; the wisdom of his recommendation was shown by the vote of the people, a few years since, on the prohibition constitutional amendment, the people sustaining the license policy by almost fifty thousand majority. We were indebted to Mr. Gaston for three excellent appointments to the Supreme Court bench, Otis P. Lord, Waldo Colburn, and William H. Gard-

ner, gentlemen who maintained the dignity and high character for which the judiciary of Massachusetts has always been distinguished, reflecting great credit upon Mr. Gaston, showing his rare judgment and discernment in the choice of men.

Mr. Gaston's position as governor was novel and trying: he was the first Democratic governor for many years, and the executive council and both branches of the Legislature were opposed to him politically; yet all conceded at the expiration of his term of office that in the administration of his public trust he acted for the good of all the people, he brought to the discharge of his public duties the lofty convictions expressed by a great writer upon the law, that "The same rules of morality which hold together families and which form families into Commonwealths link together those Commonwealths as members of the great society of mankind." No law ever received his approval that he did not believe conformed to the high standard of morality which he set for himself, and he carefully scrutinized every grant of public moneys, that individuals or corporations should not be favored at the expense of the public treasury. When he retired from office he had the supreme satisfaction of knowing that his course was commended by the people without distinction of party, and that he carried with him into private life their undiminished love and respect. As he had on assuming the office of governor absolutely relinquished his practice as a lawyer and gave himself unreservedly to the duties of his office,

when he retired from the executive chair he had neither a case nor a client, and once more resumed his professional work. Many men are only conspicuous when in public office, but Mr. Gaston needed no office nor title to give him reputation or fame: during the years of his retirement from public office, he became again a leader at the bar and a prominent figure and potent factor in the life of this community, answering from time to time the call of his fellow-citizens on important occasions.

Mr. Gaston was fond of good literature. His favorite authors were Burke and Walter Scott. He was an earnest and industrious student of that great statesman and philosopher Burke, for whom he had a profound admiration, and whom he told me was most helpful to him in guiding and directing him in public affairs. There was a trait in which he resembled Burke: he had "that chastity of honor that felt a stain like a wound;" he was one of the most sensitive men that I ever met; he felt keenly every unjust expression, yet was thankful for honest criticism and deeply grateful for kindly appreciation. I think the degrees of doctor of law conferred on him by Brown and Harvard Universities gave him more pleasure and satisfaction than all the political honors that ever came to him. Some of his associates at the bar have thought that he was not a social man. I think he was misunderstood. He was a shy, retiring character, who did not court publicity, but those who knew him in his early days in Roxbury, and in the intimacy of his private life, speak of him as a most agreeable and a lovable man.

Domestic in his nature, he loved his home and idolized his family. I should be presuming too much, did I invade the sacred precincts of that home, yet I cannot refrain from speaking of the depth and intensity of his affection for the loved of his household. We know that there was nothing in his life that might not have been seen of all men. He was the soul of truth and honor. We know that

> "Whatever record leaps to light,
> He never would be shamed."

He has passed from our mortal ken, but the influence of his life and example lives after him; the world is better for the part he took in it; his life is a shining example for the youth of our country. We remember his sterling integrity, his earnestness which often kindled into burning eloquence,—a trait which came to him from his Celtic blood,—his great kindliness of heart, his fidelity to his friends, his respect for authority, and his faithfulness to every trust, public and private. I wish there were vouchsafed to me that almost divine gift of speech, that I might fittingly eulogize our friend, that I could portray as they deserve his qualities as citizen, lawyer, orator, and statesman. I can only ask you to accept my poor effort as an earnest of what I would wish to say. Can I not truthfully say of him, as he said of Dr. Howe in his eulogy, "Besides great ability, there are two things which make men strong — an intelligent conscience and the courage to obey it. True courage is not noisy, it does not consist in defiant manner or vaporing speech. It does

191717

consist in a quiet determination to do right because it is right, in travelling a straight, though frequently unpopular, pathway. It is easy to float with the current, but to breast it requires both strength and boldness."

I know the cynical man may ask, Do you claim for him great perfection? No; and were he living he would be the first to rebuke me, did I make such a claim in his presence. I know he would say, "Speak of me as I am: nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice." When we look upon a diamond, turning the light upon its many faces, we do not search with microscopic eye to discover flaws and imperfections. We are satisfied with the jewel as it is. We know William Gaston was human, and we loved him because he was human, and made a brave and manly fight for the right as he understood it. He walked in and out amongst us for half a century, so true, so courageous, so tender, — a man of absolute rectitude, whose whole life was an open book. He passed away into immortality from that home which was his sanctuary, and in which he was so fondly loved, as peacefully and calmly as if in a pleasant dream. "Death bringeth good fame," says Bacon. If a good life, a noble purpose and exalted patriotism, and fidelity to duty, deserve good fame, then, so long as the citizens of Massachusetts shall honor such qualities and endeavor to emulate such virtues the fame of William Gaston will be secure.

# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX A.

The following resolutions were introduced in the Board of Aldermen, June 25, 1894, by Alderman Dever, and were unanimously adopted by both branches of the City Council, as follows:

*Resolved*, That the thanks of the City Council be hereby expressed to Thomas J. Gargan, Esq., for the eloquent oration delivered by him before the city authorities on Wednesday, June 13, 1894, in memory of the life and services of the late William Gaston, in the Dudley Street Opera House, and that he be requested to furnish a copy thereof for publication.

*Resolved*, That the thanks of the City Council be hereby expressed to Rev. Minot J. Savage for preparing and delivering the poem at the memorial exercises in honor of the late William Gaston, at the Dudley Street Opera House, on the 13th inst., under the auspices of the City Council.

*Resolved*, That the thanks of the City Council be hereby expressed to the Rev. Albert Walkley for officiating as chaplain at the memorial services in honor of the late William Gaston, held under the auspices of the city, at the Dudley Street Opera House, on the 13th inst.

# APPENDIX B.

Hon. William Gaston was the last surviving mayor of Roxbury, and at a meeting, of which Samuel Little was Chairman and L. Foster Morse Secretary, held Saturday, January 20, 1894, of the members of the old Roxbury city government, the following resolutions were passed:

*Resolved,* That we recall with pleasure his many admirable qualities: his courtesy, his kindness, his dignity his graceful, forcible, and eloquent speech; his wisdom in counsel; his watchful care over the public interests in his charge; his industry and energy in the performance of his duties. During the years 1861 and 1862 he was mayor of the city of Roxbury, having previously served the community in which he began his active life as member and President of its Common Council, as its Representative in the General Court, and as City Solicitor. He afterwards represented it in the State Senate, and on its annexation to Boston continued his active and eminent public service in the government of the larger city and of the State.

He has died full of years and honors, after a distinguished professional and public career, and we desire to record our sense of the value of those early years of public service, and of the qualities of mind and character which made our association with him a pleasure and a privilege.